

Responding to Jesus in Faith

Mark 5:21-43

Pastor Adam McMurray

A Deeper Look at Jesus Christ and the Response of Faith

Our journey through 1 Corinthians has in many ways been a journey back to the heart of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul's *modus operandi* in the first four chapters of his letter is to remind the believers at Corinth of the Message that they first received; the message that resulted in their salvation. The heart of chapters 1-4 is captured by the powerful statement in 1 Corinthians 2:2, "For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified." This being said, it seems fitting that we would pause in our journey through 1 Corinthians to focus more intently on Jesus and to ask the question, "What is the appropriate response to Jesus Christ?" What does the Bible elevate as the ideal faith response to Jesus and His message? The natural place to find answers to such questions is in the Gospels. We find in Mark 5 a powerful depiction of the role faith plays in the person who has come into contact with Jesus Christ.

True Faith-Desperation Joined to Hope and Action

The first five chapters of Mark recount a dizzying display of the deity and power of Jesus Christ, including miraculous healings, the casting out of demons, His authority over nature, and the climactic miracle in Chapter 5 in which Jesus raises a young girl from the dead. The striking feature of Mark's gospel is that by and large people responded to Jesus with unbelief. The rare few who did find true faith were those in deepest need and desperation. A woman who had been bleeding internally for twelve years, who had been ostracized by her community as "unclean," who had spent her life's savings on doctors who had failed to heal her, reached out to Jesus Christ in faith. The man whose little daughter lay dying in her bed reached out to Jesus in faith. A major theme in the Book of Mark is that true and pure faith occurs when we realize our desperate need for Christ, and with hope reach out to Him. Are you at the point of desperation in your life? Have you turned in hope to Jesus Christ?

The Power of Faith-Healing and Salvation

In Chapter 5, the word translated "healed," is the Greek word *sozo*, and is usually translated "saved." The use of this word then retains a nuance of more than just physical wholeness. The characters involved believed that their illness was past the point of curing except by some miraculous intervention. In their desperate situation, healing meant salvation! Mark tells us that when the woman touched Jesus' cloak, her bleeding stopped immediately. But more importantly, Jesus, after seeking her out in the crowd and interacting with her personally, proclaims, "Daughter, your faith has 'saved' you." This is the powerful result of a pure faith in Jesus Christ. When we turn to Christ in our moment of desperation we receive so much more than just physical healing. True faith in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God means eternal salvation! This is the only appropriate response to Jesus. It will require great risk, going against the status quo, pushing through the crowd, reaching out! But, as Jesus told the desperate father that day, "Don't be afraid, just believe."

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

Read Mark 5:21-43 this week.

How did this passage or the message this week impact you personally?

Desperation and Faith

What did you learn about the connection between desperation and our personal faith in Jesus Christ?

Can you remember a time when in total desperation you turned to Jesus? What happened? What kind of healing did you experience?

Is there an issue or situation in your life today that you have not taken to Jesus in faith?

What is keeping you from going to Christ now?

Upcoming Events:

TONIGHT

Sunday 11/4 - All City Worship @ Mt. Park, 6:00-7:45pm

Join Pastor Josh & other student leaders for this all city event! There will be no regular Jr. High Youth Group tonight. For more information contact Pastor Josh at 699-2226 Josh@riverwest.org

COMING UP

Friday 11/9 - Family Dinner & Card Making, 6:30-8:30pm@ RWLG

Bring the family out for dinner followed by Thanksgiving card making for the HOTEL ministry. For more information contact Lindsay at 699.2226 or lindsay@riverwest.org

Fri, Nov 9th-Sat, Nov 10th

Jr. High Overnighter @ Safari Sam's, 9:00pm—8:00am For more information contact Pastor Josh at 699-2226 or Josh@riverwest.org.

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"Forgiven & Set Free"

Bible study to start soon. Have you had an abortion? Are you living with shame and guilt? Has it been difficult to accept the promises and the grace and the unconditional love of God in your life? Please call Sheri Harkavy 503 887-7080 or Raffa Scanlon 503 449-1316 (personal lines) to get more information about this completely confidential study.